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Interim Newsletter Resumes Publication

The publication of the Montana Legislative Branch newsletter resumes with this issue of *The Interim* and continues each month through December 2016. This electronic newsletter contains links to interim committee Web pages, where meeting schedules, agendas, reports, and other information can be found for each committee.

The newsletter will contain regular reports on the activities of interim committees, as well as new committees and commissions created by the 2015 Legislature. It also will contain updates from the Legislative Council, the Environmental Quality Council, the Legislative Finance Committee, and the Legislative Audit Committee.

The ongoing interim committees staffed by the Legislative Services Division are:

- Children, Families, Health, and Human Services Committee;
- Economic Affairs Committee;
- Education and Local Government Committee;
- Energy and Telecommunications Committee;
- Law and Justice Committee;
- Revenue and Transportation Committee;
- State Administration and Veterans' Affairs Committee;
- State-Tribal Relations Committee; and
- Water Policy Committee.

These committees conduct interim studies as assigned by the Legislative Council or as may be determined by a particular committee. The committees are also responsible for state agency monitoring and administrative rule review and may recommend legislative changes to improve the operation of a state agency within a committee's jurisdiction. The public is encouraged to participate in the activities of interim committees.

The 2015 Legislature also created four temporary committees that will look at specific topics, as required by the following legislation:

- House Bill 430, which created a Judicial Redistricting Commission;

- HB 627, which created the Office of Public Defender Task Force;
- Senate Bill 128, which created the School Funding Interim Commission; and
- SB 224, which created the Commission on Sentencing.

Those panels are made up of both legislators and other appointees.

Membership of the interim and administrative committees can be found on pages 7-8 of this issue.

Taking a Closer Look

A regular feature of *The Interim* is the “Back Page,” which presents an in-depth analysis each month on a topic of importance to Montanans. Topics typically include public education, taxation and budgeting, health care, economic development, energy, natural resources, climate change, transportation, and water policy. Articles also may focus on topics of professional interest to staff and other themes. This month’s article, on page 10, discusses the assignment of interim studies to the various committees.

Sign Up for Online Edition

The newsletter is posted online each month. If you’d like to receive an e-mail notification when the newsletter is available, simply sign up at http://leg.mt.gov/css/Lyris/email_logon.asp by providing your e-mail address and selecting “Interim Newsletter” from the choices on the following page.

The Legislature accommodates individuals with disabilities and will provide a paper copy upon request to those individuals who are unable to access the newsletter electronically.

If you have questions, comments, or suggestions about *The Interim*, please contact Derek Gallagher at 406-444-2957 or derekgallagher@mt.gov.

Children and Families Committee to Review Mental Health, Guardianship

The Children, Families, Health, and Human Services Interim Committee will meet June 3 to discuss and decide how it will proceed with assigned studies and other health and human services topics during the upcoming interim.

The committee will undertake three studies this interim. Members also are likely to follow developments resulting from legislation passed earlier this year to expand the Medicaid program to childless adults and to close the Montana Developmental Center, which serves severely developmentally disabled adults.

The committee’s assigned studies stem from the following legislation:

- House Bill 422, requiring the committee to review evidence-based outcomes and performance-based pay for children’s mental health providers in order to develop legislation for a pilot project;
- Senate Bill 418, directing the committee to monitor and evaluate the implementation of mental health initiatives funded during the 2015 legislative session and make recommendations to the 2017 Legislature on any needed changes; and
- SJR 22, requesting a study of guardianship laws and services for elderly and disabled individuals.

The committee will review and act on draft study plans for each of the studies at its organizational meeting. Members also will elect officers and decide how to divide the committee’s time among the assigned studies and other duties.

Senate members of the committee are Mary Caferro, D-Helena; Eric Moore, R-Miles City; Diane Sands, D-Missoula; and Roger Webb, R-Billings. House members are Ron Ehli, R-Hamilton; Jessica Karjala, D-Billings; Al Olszewski, R-Kalispell; and Gordon Pierson, D-Deer Lodge.

People interested in following the committee’s activities may sign up for electronic notification of committee meetings and activities at http://leg.mt.gov/css/Lyris/email_logon.asp.

First Meeting

The committee will meet at 10:30 a.m. on June 3 in Room 137 of the Capitol in Helena. For more information on the committee’s activities and upcoming meeting, visit the committee’s Web site or contact Sue O’Connell, committee staff.

Committee Web Site: www.leg.mt.gov/cfhhs

Committee Staff: soconnell@mt.gov or 406-444-3597

Economic Affairs Committee to Meet June 10

The Economic Affairs Interim Committee will hold its first meeting on June 10 in Helena. In addition to electing a presiding officer and vice presiding officer, the committee will review a work plan and schedule for the 2015-2016 interim.

An agenda and meeting materials will be available in early June on the committee Web site. Part of the work plan will include steps for implementing two studies:

- an examination required under Senate Bill 390 of how the Department of Labor and Industry determines its charges for the operational activities of professional and occupational licensing boards; and

- an analysis and review requested under House Joint Resolution 29 of how membership-based health care services, including air ambulances, affect the financial health of consumers and insurers and impact medical facilities and providers. The study also will look at regulation and enforcement aspects.

Senate members of the committee are: Tom Facey, D-Missoula; Rick Ripley, R-Wolf Creek; Gordon Vance, R-Bozeman; and Lea Whitford, D-Cut Bank. House members are: Mike Lang, R-Malta; Ryan Lynch, D-Butte; Nate McConnell, D-Missoula; and Vince Ricci, R-Laurel.

First Meeting

The committee meets next at 10 a.m. on June 10 in Room 102 of the Capitol in Helena. For more information on the committee's activities and upcoming meeting, visit the committee's Web site or contact Pat Murdo, committee staff.

Committee Web Site: www.leg.mt.gov/eaic

Committee Staff: pmurdo@mt.gov or 406-444-3594

Energy Committee Schedules June 5 Meeting

Members of the Energy and Telecommunications Interim Committee will meet June 5 to adopt a draft work plan, mapping out their work for the interim, and elect a presiding officer and vice-presiding officer. Members also will hear from the Public Service Commission on recent dockets.

During the legislative interim, the committee typically focuses on study topics it has been assigned, while also maintaining oversight of programs and rulemaking activities of the Department of Public Service Regulation and the PSC. It also may address issues and improve law as it deems to be in the best interest of the state.

Following the close of the 2015 legislative session, the Legislative Council assigned three studies to the committee: Senate Joint Resolution 12, a study of the costs and benefits of net metering in Montana; House Joint Resolution 7, a study of next-generation 9-1-1; and HJR 16, a study of ridesharing.

The net metering study is expected to include an evaluation of net metering's impacts on utility operations as well as an analysis of the economic development impacts of net metering in Montana. The next-generation 9-1-1 study will likely focus on the state and federal regulations that will guide implementation and advancement of next-generation 9-1-1. With the passage and approval of Senate Bill 396, which provides for ridesharing and establishes a new class of motor carriers in Montana, the committee's study of ridesharing may focus primarily on implementation of the new law.

Senate members of the committee are Duane Ankney, R-Colstrip; Pat Connell, R-Hamilton; Robyn Driscoll, D-Billings; and Cliff Larsen, D-Missoula. House members are Chris Pope, D-Bozeman; Keith Regier, R-Kalispell; Tom Steenberg, D-Missoula; and Daniel Zolnikov, R-Billings.

First Meeting

The committee will meet at 9 a.m. on June 5 in Room 172 of the Capitol in Helena. For more information on the committee's activities and upcoming meeting, visit the committee's Web site or contact Sonja Nowakowski, committee staff.

Committee Web Site: www.leg.mt.gov/etic

Committee Staff: snwakowski@mt.gov or 406-444-3078

Environmental Quality Council to Set Priorities in June

The Environmental Quality Council will set its priorities for the interim between legislative sessions at a meeting June 3-4 in Helena.

The council was assigned one study resolution passed by the 2015 Legislature. House Joint Resolution 13, sponsored by Rep. Kerry White, is a study of road access on federal lands. The EQC is tasked with assessing road closures on federal lands over the last 35 years, identifying landlocked parcels of public land, and evaluating deer and elk trends in relation to limited access to federal lands.

The council also has a full slate of duties required by law, including oversight of the departments of Environmental Quality, Natural Resources and Conservation, and Fish, Wildlife, and Parks.

The EQC will elect its presiding and vice-presiding officers at its June meeting.

Senate members of the council are John Brenden, R-Scobey; Jim Keane, D-Butte; Mike Phillips, D-Bozeman; Rick Ripley, R-Wolf Creek; Cary Smith, R-Billings; and Gene Vuckovich, D-Anaconda. House members are Jerry Bennett, R-Libby; Willis Curdy, D-Missoula; Janet Ellis, D-Helena; Ed Lieser, D-Whitefish; Theresa Manzella, R-Hamilton; and Kerry White, R-Bozeman.

The EQC has four public members: Scott Aspenlieder, Billings; Brooke Erb, Dillon; Bert Lindler, Missoula; and Roy Morris, Butte. Tim Baker, a representative of the governor, is a non-voting member.

Other items on the June agenda include updates on the 2014 fire season, wolf management, implementation of the Sage Grouse Stewardship Act, proposed fishing regulations, and the closure of petroleum tank release sites.

First Meeting

The EQC will meet at 1 p.m. on June 3 in Room 172 of the Capitol in Helena. The meeting will continue at 8 a.m. on June 4. For more information on the council's activities and upcoming meeting, please visit the council's Web site or contact Joe Kolman, council staff.

Council Web Site: www.leg.mt.gov/eqc

Council Staff: jkolman@mt.gov or 406-444-3747

Law and Justice Committee to Take Up Sexual Assault Study

The Law and Justice Interim Committee will hold an organizational meeting on June 26 in Helena.

The committee is established in section 5-5-226, MCA, and is charged with oversight during of the interim of the Office of the State Public Defender, the Department of Corrections, the Department of Justice, and any entity administratively attached to one of those agencies. The committee also acts as a liaison with the judicial branch.

In addition to its agency oversight duties, the committee was assigned one interim study by the Legislative Council. Senate Joint Resolution 24 requests an interim study of sexual assault in Montana. Sen. Diane Sands carried the study resolution, and it ranked seventh in the interim study poll.

Senate members of the committee are Doug Kary, R-Billings; Sue Malek, D-Missoula; Mary Sheehy Moe, D-Great Falls; Scott Sales, R-Bozeman; Diane Sands, D-Missoula; and Nels Swandal, R-Wilsall. House members are Jenny Eck, D-Helena; Ellie Boldman Hill, D-Missoula; Sarah Laszloffy, R-Laurel; Steve Lavin, R-Kalispell; Dale Mortensen, R-Billings; and Carolyn Pease-Lopez, D-Billings.

First Meeting

The committee will meet June 25 in Room 102 of the Capitol in Helena. An agenda and meeting materials, including a study plan for the SJR 24 study, will be available in mid-June. For more information on the committee's activities and upcoming meeting, visit the committee's Web site or contact Rachel Weiss, committee staff.

Committee Web Site: www.leg.mt.gov/ljic

Committee Staff: rweiss@mt.gov or 406-444-5367

Legislative Audit Committee Meets June 23-24

The Legislative Audit Committee will meet June 23-24 in Helena to elect new officers and review recent audits of state programs and services.

The Legislative Audit Division anticipates reports on the following topics at the June meeting:

Financial Audits

- Montana State Lottery (13-30B)
- Montana Water Pollution Control and Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Programs (13-25B)
- State of Montana (13-01B)

Financial Compliance Audits

- Office of the Secretary of State (14-19)
- Public Employees' Retirement Board (14-08A)
- Teachers' Retirement System (14-09A)

Information Systems Audits

- Data Reliability of the Montana Automated Educational Finance and Information Reporting System, MAEFAIRS (14DP-02)

Performance Audits

- Administration of Montana Drug Courts (13P-08)
- Bankcard Transaction Fees and Contract Management (14P-04)
- Game Damage Program (14P-06)
- The Rate Setting Process within the State Information Technology Services Division (14P-01)

Contract Audits

- Dawson Community College (14C-06)
- Flathead Valley Community College (14C-07)
- Miles City Community College (14C-08)

Audit Follow-ups

Information Systems

- Vital Statistics Information Management System (13DP-02)

Performance

- State Investment Management and Governance Practices (12P-10)

Twelve legislators serve on this administrative committee. Senate members are Dee Brown, R-Hungry Horse; Taylor Brown, R-Huntley; Mary McNally, D-Billings; JP Pomnichowski, D-Bozeman; Bruce Tutvedt, R-Kalispell; and Gene Vuckovich D-Anaconda. House members are Randy Brodehl,

R-Kalispell; Tom Burnett, R-Bozeman; Virginia Court, D-Billings; Denise Hayman, D-Bozeman; Kenneth Holmlund, R-Miles City; and Mitch Tropila, D-Great Falls.

The Legislative Audit Division provides independent and objective evaluations of the stewardship, performance, and cost of government policies, programs, and operations. The division is responsible for conducting financial, performance, and information system audits of state agencies and their programs, including the Montana university system. To report suspected improper acts committed by state agencies, departments, or employees, call the division's fraud hotline at 800-222-4446 or 406-444-4446 in Helena.

First Meeting

The committee will meet at 1:30 p.m. on June 23-24 in Room 172 of the Capitol in Helena. For more information on the committee's activities and upcoming meeting, visit the committee's Web site or contact Legislative Auditor Tori Hunthausen.

Committee Web Site: www.leg.mt.gov/audit

Committee Staff: thunthausen@mt.gov or 406-444-3122

Legislative Council Assigns Studies, Considers CSG Initiative

The Legislative Council met May 18 to elect officers and assign studies to interim committees.

Members elected Rep. Chuck Hunter as presiding officer and Sen. Debby Barrett as vice-presiding officer.

The council also assigned 14 of the 15 interim study resolutions passed by the 2015 Legislature, with 12 of the resolutions assigned to interim committees and two to the Legislative Finance Committee. This will be a busy interim as the Legislature also passed seven study bills, four of which created separate commissions or task forces that also include legislators as members and must be staffed by the Legislative Services Division.

The list of studies and their assignments is discussed in the Back Page article beginning on page 10.

CSG Justice Center Effort

Carl Reynolds, senior legal and policy adviser from the Council of State Governments Justice Center, briefed the council on a Justice Reinvestment initiative. This is an initiative that will be a cooperative effort of all three branches of government. If chosen, Montana can receive technical assistance to study Montana's criminal justice system and sentencing practices in an effort to reduce correctional costs and increase public safety. This opportunity would assist the Senate Bill

224 Commission on Sentencing that will study the criminal justice system and provide extensive quantitative analysis.

The council asked legislative staff to coordinate a letter to request assistance and pledge support. The letter is to be signed by Senate President Debby Barrett, House Speaker Austin Knudsen, Gov. Steve Bullock, Chief Justice Mike McGrath, Attorney General Tim Fox, and Corrections Director Mike Batista.

Session Publication Prices Approved

The council set the session publication prices, which include a slight increase for the full set of the Montana Code Annotated to the private sector and government agencies, for individual volumes, and for individual titles. The prices for the MCA on CD-ROM remain the same, as does the price for the History and Final Status.

The Legal Services staff is in full swing with codification, and the new MCA sets should be available by mid-September. The publications may be ordered from the legislative Web site at www.leg.mt.gov/css/Publications/purchase.asp.

NSCL and CSG Appointments

The council approved appointments to the National Conference of State Legislatures and Council of State Governments Standing Committees. These organizations provide legislators and staff participation opportunities and information and access to other legislators, staff, and resources in policy areas similar to the Legislature's standing committees.

For a complete list of appointees, see the [Legislative Council Web site](#).

Other Activities

The council also adopted a Memorandum of Agreement for use of the respective legislative chambers by the Montana Historical Society and the tours that it offers to the public. In the agreement, the council sought to balance the open public access that Montanans expect with appropriate decorum and respect for the historic chambers.

The council also adopted the Legislative Services Division and the Interim Committees and Activities Operating Budgets for the 2016-2017 biennium. And Debra LaFountaine of the Department of Military Affairs consulted the council regarding a land transfer in Miles City from the Department of Military Affairs to Miles Community College. This consultation is required pursuant to 77-2-3512, MCA, prior to an agency going to the Land Board for final approval of a land transfer.

Committee Members

Senate members of the council are Debby Barrett, R-Dillon; Ed Buttrey, R-Great Falls; Robyn Driscoll, D-Billings; Tom Facey, D-Missoula; Jon Sesso, D-Butte; and Janna Taylor, R-Dayton. House members are Bryce Bennett, D-Missoula; Jeff Essmann, R-Billings; Stephanie Hess, R-Havre; Chuck Hunter, D-Helena; Austin Knudsen, R-Culbertson; and Margie MacDonald, D-Billings.

Next Meeting

The council will meet next during the week of Aug. 10-17 on a date to be determined. At that time, the council will hold its biennial strategic planning session after a short business meeting. For more information on the committee's activities and upcoming meeting, visit the committee's Web site or contact Susan Byorth Fox, committee staff.

Committee Web Site: www.leg.mt.gov/legcouncil

Committee Staff: sfox@mt.gov or 406-444-3066

Finance Committee to Meet June 18

The Legislative Finance Committee will review a summary of the state budget developed by the 2015 Legislature for the next two-year budget cycle when it meets June 18 in Helena.

The Legislative Finance Committee is a permanent, bipartisan committee of the Legislature. During the interim, the committee monitors fiscal activities and programs of state government and oversees the budget analysis and research functions of the Legislative Fiscal Division.

In addition to the 2017 Biennium Legislative Fiscal Report, the agenda for the June meeting includes:

- election of committee officers;
- an update on the Legislative Fiscal Report: 2015 Biennium; and
- a report from the state's chief information officer report on information technology and recommendations for the interim.

The committee members will hold the first part of the meeting at the Capitol and then move to the Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks facility at Spring Meadow Lake, 2868 Broadwater Ave.

The Legislative Fiscal Report: 2017 Biennium will be available in June after completion of the legislative polling process. This publication serves as a historical record of the fiscal decisions made during the 2015 legislative session. The fiscal report will include:

- an overview of the state budget;

- revenue estimates; and
- agency budgets.

The information included in the fiscal report provides legislators with a detailed budget reference tool. Printed copies of the fiscal report will be available in limited quantities. However, it will be available online at <http://leg.mt.gov/fbp-2017.asp>

Senate members of the committee are Mary Caferro, D-Helena; Llew Jones, R-Conrad; Bob Keenan, R-Bigfork; Eric Moore, R-Miles City; Jon Sesso, D-Butte; and Cynthia Wolken, D-Missoula. House members are Nancy Ballance, R-Hamilton; Kimberly Dudik, D-Missoula; Pat Noonan, D-Ramsay; Ryan Osmundson, R-Butte; Mitch Tropila, D-Great Falls; and Brad Tschida, R-Missoula.

First Meeting

The committee will meet at 8:30 a.m. on June 18 in Room 102 of the Capitol in Helena before moving to the FWP facility for its off-site meeting. For more information on the committee's activities and upcoming meeting, visit the committee's Web site or contact Diane McDuffie, committee secretary.

Committee Web Site: www.leg.mt.gov/lfc

Committee Staff: dmcduffie@mt.gov or 406-444-2986

Water Policy Committee to Discuss 2015-2016 Priorities

The Water Policy Interim Committee will meet June 1-2 to discuss committee priorities for the upcoming 15 months as members undertake new duties assigned by the 2015 Legislature.

Senate Bill 82 expanded and focused the committee's duties to include oversight of issues and agency programs "where the primary concern is the quality or quantity of water." As a result, certain Department of Environmental Quality bureaus and a Department of Natural Resources and Conservation division will report to the committee, including for reviews of administrative rules and legislation.

Another committee priority includes a study of federal Section 404 permitting. Senate Joint Resolution 2 asks the committee to examine the feasibility of assuming authority over the permitting process from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The Clean Water Act requires Section 404 permits for actions that place dredged or fill material into wetlands or other waters of the United States. This might include filling a wetland, constructing a dam or levee, building highways or airports, or mining. Section 404 permits are among other permits required by state or local jurisdictions.

The committee welcomes three new members this interim: Reps. Bob Brown, R-Thompson Falls; Zach Brown, D-Bozeman; and Carl Glimm, R-Kila. Rep. Kathleen Williams, D-Bozeman, will return to the committee for another interim. Returning Senate members are: Jennifer Fielder, R-Thompson Falls; Brad Hamlett, D-Cascade; Sharon Stewart-Peregoy, D-Crow Agency; and Chas Vincent, R-Libby.

First Meeting

The committee will meet at 1 p.m. on June 1 in Room 172 of the Capitol in Helena. The meeting will resume at 9 a.m. on June 2. For more information about the committee's activities and upcoming meeting, visit the committee's Web site or contact Jason Mohr, committee staff.

Committee Web Site: www.leg.mt.gov/water

Committee Staff: jasonmohr@mt.gov or 444-1640

Inaugural Shuttle Service a Success

The Capital Shuttle Service provided nearly 10,000 rides during its first session in service.

The service provided parking space at the Capital Hill Mall and a shuttle to the Capitol. A total of 9,924 shuttle riders were transported from Jan. 6 through April 24 this year. The peak use occurred in January, followed by February with 3,252 riders. The shuttle transported a total 2,978 riders in the last two months of the session.

The top week was Jan. 19-23, with 1,167 riders being shuttled to and from the Capitol.

The 2015 Legislature honored the City of Helena and the Helen Area Transit Service for providing the valued Capital Shuttle Service with a joint proclamation signed by leadership and read over the rostrum.

Legislative Services Division was fortunate to be involved with the project and thanks the following for their generous partnership in a successful venture: the Department of Administration, Capital Hill Mall & Trigild, in addition to Helena Area Transit Service, Helena city government, and the Helena City Commission. Special thanks to the sponsors who defrayed the cost of the parking lease: Perceptive Software, MHA - An Association of Montana Health Care Providers, Cornerstone Communications, Montana Trial Lawyers Association, Montana Petroleum Association, Montana's Credit Unions, Montana Bankers Association, Crowley Fleck Attorneys, and Montana Taxpayers Association.

Montana Health Centers Open to Legislators, Family Members

Legislators and their family members who are signed up for the State Employee Benefits Plan may continue to use the Montana Health Centers around the state.

Currently, the centers are located in Anaconda, Butte, Billings, Helena, Miles City, and Missoula. If you do not live in one of those communities, you are still eligible to go to any of the health center locations.

The centers should help provide additional access to those who may have not been able to see a primary care provider in the past. If necessary, the health centers will make referrals to a patient's community health care providers.

For the up-to-date locations and hours for the centers, visit <http://healthcenter.mt.gov>.

Appointments Made to Interim and Administrative Committees

The appointing authorities of the House and Senate have made the following appointments to the 2015-16 administrative and interim committees of the Legislature.

Children, Families, Health, and Human Services Committee

Rep. Ron Ehli	Sen. Mary Caferro
Rep. Jessica Karjala	Sen. Eric Moore
Rep. Albert Olszewski	Sen. Diane Sands
Rep. Gordon Pierson	Sen. Roger Webb

Economic Affairs Interim Committee

Rep. Mike Lang	Sen. Tom Facey
Rep. Ryan Lynch	Sen. Rick Ripley
Rep. Nate McConnell	Sen. Gordon Vance
Rep. Vince Ricci	Sen. Lea Whitford

Education and Local Government Interim Committee

Rep. Seth Berglee	Sen. Elsie Arntzen
Rep. Moffie Funk	Sen. Jill Cohenour
Rep. Donald Jones	Sen. Mary Sheehy Moe
Rep. Debra Lamm	Sen. Matt Rosendale
Rep. Jean Price	Sen. Sharon Stewart-Peregoy
Rep. Tom Woods	Sen. Gordon Vance

Energy and Telecommunications Interim Committee

Rep. Chris Pope	Sen. Duane Ankney
Rep. Keith Regier	Sen. Pat Connell
Rep. Tom Steenberg	Sen. Robyn Driscoll
Rep. Daniel Zolnikov	Sen. Cliff Larsen

Environmental Quality Council

Rep. Jerry Bennett	Sen. John Brenden
Rep. Willis Curdy	Sen. Jim Keane
Rep. Janet Ellis	Sen. Mike Phillips
Rep. Ed Lieser	Sen. Rick Ripley
Rep. Theresa Manzella	Sen. Cary Smith
Rep. Kerry White	Sen. Gene Vuckovich

Law and Justice Interim Committee

Rep. Jenny Eck	Sen. Doug Kary
Rep. Ellie Boldman Hill	Sen. Sue Malek
Rep. Sarah Laszloffy	Sen. Mary Sheehy Moe
Rep. Steve Lavin	Sen. Scott Sales
Rep. Dale Mortensen	Sen. Diane Sands
Rep. Carolyn Pease-Lopez	Sen. Nels Swandal

Revenue and Transportation Interim Committee

Rep. Jeff Essmann	Sen. Dick Barrett
Rep. Gerg Hertz	Sen. Mark Blasdel
Rep. Tom Jacobson	Sen. Brian Hoven
Rep. Rae Peppers	Sen. Christine Kaufmann
Rep. Alan Redfield	Sen. Sue Malek
Rep. Bridget Smith	Sen. Fred Thomas

State Administration and Veterans' Affairs

Rep. Bryce Bennett	Sen. Dee Brown
Rep. Forrest Mandeville	Sen. Doug Kary
Rep. Wendy McKamey	Sen. Cliff Larsen
Rep. Kathy Swanson	Sen. Jonathan Windy Boy

State-Tribal Relations Interim Committee

Rep. Alan Doane	Sen. Jill Cohenour
Rep. Edward Greef	Sen. Jennifer Fielder
Rep. George Kipp III	Sen. Kris Hansen
Rep. Zac Perry	Sen. Jonathan Windy Boy

Water Policy Interim Committee

Rep. Bob Brown	Sen. Jennifer Fielder
Rep. Zach Brown	Sen. Brad Hamlett
Rep. Carl Glimm	Sen. Sharon Stewart-Peregoy
Rep. Kathleen Williams	Sen. Chas Vincent

Information Technology Planning Council

Rep. Kirk Wagoner	Sen. Roger Webb
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Legislative Audit Committee

Rep. Randy Brodehl	Sen. Dee Brown
Rep. Tom Burnett	Sen. Taylor Brown
Rep. Virginia Court	Sen. Mary McNally
Rep. Denise Hayman	Sen. JP Pomnichowski
Rep. Kenneth Holmlund	Sen. Bruce Tutvedt
Rep. Mitch Tropila	Sen. Gene Vuckovich

Legislative Council

Rep. Bryce Bennett	Sen. Debby Barrett
Rep. Jeff Essmann	Sen. Ed Buttrey
Rep. Stephanie Hess	Sen. Robyn Driscoll
Rep. Chuck Hunter	Sen. Tom Facey
Rep. Austin Knudsen	Sen. Jon Sesso
Rep. Margie MacDonald	Sen. Janna Taylor

Legislative Consumer Counsel

Rep. Mike Cuffe	Sen. Robyn Driscoll
Rep. Andrea Olsen	Sen. Janna Taylor

Legislative Finance Committee

Rep. Nancy Ballance	Sen. Mary Caferro
Rep. Kimberly Dudik	Sen. Llew Jones
Rep. Pat Noonan	Sen. Bob Keenan
Rep. Ryan Osmundson	Sen. Eric Moore
Rep. Mitch Tropila	Sen. Jon Sesso
Rep. Brad Tschida	Sen. Cynthia Wolken

LEGISLATURE AT A GLANCE

A Legislative Services Division Perspective

June 2015

Statistics	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015
Number of bill draft requests	2,581	2,369	2,246	2,218	2,471
Number of bills/resolutions introduced	1,525	1,314	1,179	1,201	1,187
Number of bills amended at least once	626	495	487	585	555
Number of times bills were processed to incorporate amendments	1,116	933	901	835	808
Number of bills enrolled - prepared in the form that they finally passed the Legislature	611	601	585	423	591
Standing and select committees staffed	30	32	32	35	35
Conference and free conference committees staffed	48	41	41	32	22
Number of vetoes by governor/number polled	20/4	13/0	78/17	71/24	58/10
Introduced bills with legal notes	--	--	--	42 (12 passed legislature; 4 vetoed)	24 (5 passed legislature; 3 vetoed)
House and Senate legislator/aide/staff computers, printers, kiosks supported	140	168	200	153	178
Legislator-owned electronic devices supported	--	--	125	207	180
Telephone messages received by Legislative Information Office *In 2015, 40 legislators received their messages electronically, up from 38 in 2013 and 24 in 2011.	12,284 many sent to 12-member committee	21,221 resulting in 125,000 printed messages	22,291 resulting in 255,000 printed messages	23,172 resulting in 75,000 printed messages	28,383 resulting in 110,000 printed messages
Web messages received by Legislative Information Office	45,238	73,895	68,769 (135,000 printed messages)	127,494 (335,000 printed messages)	82,205 (300,000 printed messages)
Pay and per diem checks (including electronic) issued to legislators and House and Senate staff	4,411	4,452	4,795	4,947	5,444
Pages (impressions) of bills, status sheets, and other documents printed	6,588,269	4,925,584	4,246,016	4,016,736	3,890,500
Printing costs	\$160,000	\$193,124	\$182,062	\$180,758	\$187,045
Years of compensatory time accumulated by LSD staff since October 2014 (2,080 hrs/yr)	3.58	3.45	3.31	2.67	3.95

The Back Page

An Overview of 2015-16 Interim Studies and Activities

by **Dave Bohyer, Research Director**
Legislative Services Division

The Legislative Services Division is required to poll all legislators following the legislative session to measure the relative importance of each study requested by resolution and passed by the Legislature. The Legislative Council has the responsibility to assign the study requests to the various legislative interim committees, and members use the poll results as one factor in making the determination. This Back Page article describes the results of the poll and the council's assignment of the studies.

The poll is mailed on the first day following adjournment of the Legislature. Fifteen studies were included in the poll, with a return date of May 8. Staff compiled data from the ballots through May 13 and presented the results to the Legislative Council on May 18.

Results of the Poll

Of the 150 ballots sent out, 103 were counted for a participation rate of 69 percent. Several additional ballots were returned too late to be counted in the poll and would have increased participation to about 73 percent.

The Borda voting method was used to rank each study requested. A ranking of "1" is the highest and a ranking of "15" is the lowest; the same method was applied to rankings in between. A study unranked on a ballot received zero points. (The Borda voting method is one method used by various organizations to rank the intercollegiate sports teams.)

The mean average number of points received by the studies was 652 points. The highest-ranking study, the Senate Joint Resolution 21 study of local fire and emergency services, received 876 points. The lowest-ranked study, the SJR 2 study of federal dredge and fill permits, received only 474 points. Of the 15 studies in the poll, eight received more than the average number of points, and seven received fewer. The median number of points received was 665, meaning that seven studies received more than 665 points and seven studies received fewer.

Approximately seven out of 10 legislators, or 72 percent, responded to the 2015 poll, compared to 77 percent in 2013 and 2011, 66 percent in 2009, 70 percent in 2007, 82 percent in 2005, 78 percent in 2003, and 84 percent in 2001.

Staff Recommendations

The Legislative Services Division staff recommended that 12 of the 15 studies requested by resolution be conducted by interim committees. The Legislative Council generally concurred with the staff's recommendation, but added the SJR 22 study of guardianship laws and services to the task list for the Children, Families, Health, and Human Services Committee and the House Joint Resolution 29 study of membership-based health services to the Economic Affairs Committee's assignments. As a result, 14 of the 15 study resolutions were assigned to committees this interim.

In making the recommendations for interim studies, staff considered the poll results, committee funding, statutory duties, and committee and staff time commitments. One critical factor in the staff's recommendations were the seven studies required by bill, four of which are to be conducted by entirely new committees. The bills requiring studies also became critical in the Legislative Council's consideration and assignments.

Because the Legislative Council has the responsibility of assigning interim studies, the staff recommendations are simply that: recommendations. Nevertheless, they are influenced by a number of factors, including:

- All interim studies are not created equal. Some have considerable breadth, depth, and complexity, while others are narrow and focused.
- The work of interim committees is not equal. Some have more extensive statutory duties and broader jurisdictions than others. Some have more members than others. Some have formed subcommittees that function much the same as full committees in terms of staff time and committee member effort.
- Interim studies are only part of what interim committees do during the interim. Each committee has a variety of statutory duties, including agency monitoring, administrative rule review, and consideration of potential legislation proposed by state agencies within the committee's jurisdiction. Some of those duties were expanded or reduced this past session by the passage of various bills.

- Each interim committee has statutory authority to examine policy matters within its purview, which typically extends beyond assigned interim studies. Staff experience suggests that each committee will exercise that authority to a greater or lesser extent. The issues that might arise or the level of involvement cannot be foreseen, but there is a history that these types of projects are likely to occur.
- Resources – staff time, committee time, and funding – are all limited.

The Legislative Council met on May 18 to decide on interim study assignments. Following staff recommendations and testimony from several sponsors of the study resolutions and from other stakeholders, the council made the assignments as shown in [Table 1](#).

Preview of Interim Activities

The 2015-16 interim is just beginning to take shape, although none of the interim committees has met yet. All of the interim committee members will have been appointed by the time this article is published. The same is not necessarily true for the new committees established by bill, although most of the legislator appointments to those committees have been made. Staffing assignments for the committees are also taking shape. [Table 2](#) lists the current staffing and study assignments for each interim committee and statutorily required committee or study.

In addition to interim studies, each interim committee has a range of statutory duties and responsibilities, which can be found in Title 5, chapter 5, part 2, MCA, and for the Environmental Quality Council in Title 75, chapter 1, part 3, MCA. The duties and responsibilities for the administrative committees of the Legislature (Legislative Audit Committee, Legislative Consumer Committee, Legislative Council, and the Legislative Finance Committee) that meet during the interim are contained in various chapters within Title 5, MCA. Other committees on which legislators serve may be found throughout the MCA.

With interim committee meetings being planned for the summer, draft work plans and proposed meeting schedules will soon be available. Stay tuned as more information will be provided in subsequent issues of The Interim newsletter and on committee Web sites. In the meantime, check the legislative Web site at www.leg.mt.gov or call the Legislative Services Division at (406) 444-3064 with any questions you may have regarding the poll, a particular study, or any of the interim committees.

[Click here for the poll results.](#)

[Click here for the summary of committee staff and study assignments.](#)